

CARDIN, MIKULSKI ANNOUNCE FEDERAL FUNDING TO RECRUIT VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators **Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) today announced the Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department won \$244,000 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER) grant program to recruit volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians. As a member of the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, Senator Mikulski fights each year to increase federal funding for the fire grants program. Senator Cardin is chairman of the Homeland Security and Terrorism Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee.

"The first responders in Hyattsville are some of the finest in our nation and I thank them every day for what they do for our community," said **Senator Cardin**. "This federal funding will ensure that Prince George's County has the resources it needs to recruit and retain the volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians who are essential to protect residents and respond to any emergency situation that may arise."

"This funding is about keeping first responders and the communities they protect safe," **Senator Mikulski** said. "In today's tough economy, fire departments don't need a hand out, they need a helping hand. These funds will help the Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department recruit the volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians needed to protect our homes and communities. Every day when our first responders report for duty, they don't know what they will face. That's why I fight every year for the equipment, training, and staffing our protectors and communities deserve."

The Hyattsville Volunteer Fire Department will use the competitive award to establish a tuition reimbursement program, which is designed to recruit and retain firefighters by assisting with the cost of obtaining a college education. Firefighters enrolled in the program agree to provide staffing in exchange for the reimbursement. For more information, please contact Matthew Davy at 301-927-5770.

The goal of any SAFER grant is to enhance the ability of grantees to attain and maintain 24-hour staffing. The objective of the program is to award grants directly to volunteer, combination, and career fire departments to help the departments increase the number of frontline firefighters, and to rehire firefighters who were laid-off due to the economy.

Since 2001, Maryland fire departments and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) units have received more than \$91 million in AFGP funding, more than \$15.5 million of which has gone to fire departments and EMS units in Prince George's County.

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